

African Globe TheatreWorks

presents

Baraka



Ali



Jefferson



African-American Men in Theatre

Saturday

October 23, 1999

Scott



Walker



Wesley

2nd Floor Theatre @
Newark Symphony Hall
1020 Broad Street
Newark, New Jersey 07102



Program

6:00-6:45pm	Reception
6:45-7:00pm	Remarks
Delores "Bobby" Reilly, Mistress of Ceremonies Welcome and Opening Remarks	
Kabu Okai-Davies, Founder/Executive Producer	
7:25-7:45pm	Awards Presentation
	2nd Floor Theatre @ Newark Symphony Hall
7:45-8:00pm	Public Seating
8:00-10:15pm	<i>River Niger</i> Directed by and starring Joseph A. Walker



Committee

Celeste Bateman, Chair
Victor Davson
Linwood Oglesby
Kabu Okai-Davies
Don Viapree

Clarence M. Ali (formerly Clarence Lilly) has worked in virtually every area of the communications and entertainment industries including music, radio, film and television in his 29 years in business. He has worked in the capacity of producer and/or director in over 200 feature film, television and theater productions. He founded Theater of Universal Images, a professional theater production company based at the Newark Symphony Hall complex, which included educational and media components. In 1980 he and his partners founded Connection Communications Corporation (CCC) and obtained cable TV franchises for the cities of Newark, Jersey City and South Orange, New Jersey. CCC was later sold to Gilbert Media and eventually to Cablevision. He is chairman and CEO of Renaissance Investors Unlimited which built a diversified entertainment distribution and programming concern specializing in niche markets nationwide and comparable markets internationally.

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Poet and dramatist, essayist and critic **Amiri Baraka** is a major force on the contemporary art scene. Born in Newark as LeRoi Jones, Baraka attended Howard and Columbia Universities. In the late 50s he became a central figure in the Greenwich Village artists scene and founded Totem Press which published works by Allen Ginsberg, Frank O'Hara and others. Considered by many to be the father of the 1960s Black arts movement, he founded the Black Arts Repertory theater in Harlem. A major influence on poets and dramatists of his time, Baraka has created an original body of work that is in the forefront of avant-garde writing. The Award-winning artist has produced over 20 plays, three jazz operas, seven non-fiction books, a novel and 13 volumes of poetry. He has taught poetry, drama and literature at several universities among them Columbia University, the University of Buffalo, the State University of New York, George Washington University and Yale University.

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Marvin-Kazembe Jefferson was the producer, artistic director and manager of the Ensemble Theatre Company (ETC), a Newark-based drama company he co-founded. In addition to directing and producing plays, he has received critical acclaim for performances as an actor in the ETC productions of *To Gleam It Around*, *To Show My Shine*, *Uncle Tom's Children*, *Roads of the Mountaintop*, *Slowdance on the Killing Ground*, *Playboy of the West Indies* and the George Street Playhouse production of *The Meeting*. Mr. Jefferson taught drama at Essex County and the New Jersey Institute of Technology. He currently teaches at Bloomfield College. He has portrayed the legendary athlete, singer and actor Paul Robeson in various performances in the tri-state area for the past three years and currently performs at New York City's Urban Stages and throughout the Newark school system.

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Ricardo Khan is co-founder and artistic director of Crossroads Theatre Company. He earned an MFA from Mason Gross School of the Arts, Rutgers University in both acting and directing; was inducted into the Rutgers University Hall of Distinguished Alumni in 1992; received an honorary Doctoral degree from Rutgers in 1997 and was given the New Jersey Governor's Award that same year for Achievement in the Arts. Mr. Khan recently directed the world premiere of the *Darker Face of the Earth*, the first play by former United States Poet Laureate, Rita Dove. The production traveled to Washington, DC

where it represented Crossroads in the Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts' 1997 season. Crossroads Theatre Company is the recipient of the 1998 Tony Award for Regional Theater.

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Newark resident Harold Scott heads the directing program at Rutgers University's Mason Gross School of the Arts in New Brunswick. His directorial credits include most of the major regional theaters from Washington's Arena Stage, Seattle Repertory, Indiana Repertory, Syracuse Stage and the Repertory Theater of St. Louis, to the Shakespeare Theater at the Folger, Stage West, Great Lakes Theater Festival and Atlanta's Alliance Theater. Mr. Scott directed the 25th Anniversary production of *A Raisin in the Sun* starring Esther Rolle and Delroy Lindo, which opened at the Roundabout Theater in New York, and moved to the Kennedy Center where it received nine national theater awards from the NAACP including Best Director. The production was then filmed for public television's *Great Performances* with Danny Glover. Most recently he directed *Suddenly Last Summer* starring Elizabeth Ashley for Broadway's Circle-In-the-Square.

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Joseph A. Walker, a Camden resident, received his Bachelors Degree from Howard University and a Masters of Fine Arts in drama from Catholic University. He taught high school in Washington, DC and later in New York City while pursuing an acting career. He studied voice and vocal reproduction and was a member of Voices, Inc. Walker co-wrote *The Believers* with Josephine Jackson, an off-Broadway production presented at the Cherry Lane Theatre in 1968. He later produced *The Harrangues* (1969) and *Ododo* (1970) at New York's Negro Ensemble Company (NEC). With Dorothy A. Dinetro, he co-produced *Yin Yang* at the Afro-American Studio (1971-72) followed by the production of *The River Niger* at NEC which moved to Broadway's Brooks Atkinson Theatre in 1973 and won the Tony for Best Play in 1974. He currently chairs the Theatre Arts and Speech Department at Rutgers University in Camden where he also serves as Director of African American Studies.

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Newark native Richard Wesley has enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a writer for stage, television and film. Some of his recent television credits include *Mandela and De Klerk* (Showtime, 1998), *Fearless* (Showtime, 1995), and *Murder Without Love* (NBC, 1992). He is currently working on a feature film entitled *Flow* for New Line Cinema. He is often best remembered for his screenplays for Warner Brothers' *Uptown Saturday Night* (1974) and *Let's Do It Again* (1975) which featured Sidney Poitier and Bill Cosby. *The Sirens*, *The Mighty Gents*, *The Talented Tenth* and *Heaven and the Homeboy* are among his major theatre credits. Mr. Wesley is the recipient of many awards and citations including several Audelco and NAACP Image Awards. He serves on several national boards and was most recently voted Vice President of the Writers Guild of America, East. He is a founding member of the Frank Silvera Writers Workshop and is currently Assistant Professor and Head of Undergraduate Admissions and Curriculum in the Department of Dramatic Writing at New York University's Tisch School of the Arts.